

**Office of the President  
of the Philippines  
Malacañang**

**MEMORANDUM FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

**TO : HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES, OFFICES AND INSTRUMENTALITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT, GOVERNMENT-OWNED OR -CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS (GOCCs), GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (GFIs), STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES (SUCs) AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS (LGUs)**

**SUBJECT : STRINGENT SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES AND FURTHER GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) SITUATION**

**DATE : 13 MAR 2020**

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This refers to Joint Resolution Nos. 11 and 12 (s. 2020) of the *Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases* (Task Force) established under Executive Order No. 168 (s. 2014), relative to the recommendations for the management of the COVID-19 situation, in light of the decision of our health officials to raise the Code Alert System for the COVID-19 in the country to *Code Red Sublevel 2*, following the sharp increase in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases throughout the country.

Pursuant to the above Joint Resolutions, Proclamation No. 922 (s. 2020) and Republic Act No. 11332, all heads of departments, agencies, offices and instrumentalities of the government, including the Philippine National Police (PNP), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), GOCCs, GFIs, SUCs and LGUs are hereby informed of and directed to adopt, coordinate and implement the following guidelines on the imposition of Stringent Social Distancing Measures in the National Capital Region (NCR) for thirty (30) days starting 00:00 a.m. of 15 March 2020 until 00:00 a.m. of 14 April 2020, unless another period is provided hereunder:

1. Classes and all school activities in all levels shall continue to be suspended until 14 April 2020. In this regard, the Department of Education (DepEd), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Technical Educational and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and such other regulatory agencies shall ensure that all SUCs, schools and universities, and other educational or training institutions provide adequate arrangements to allow the students to continue fulfilling their requirements during said period. All LGUs, with the assistance of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), shall be responsible for implementing measures to ensure that students remain in their homes during the class suspension;
2. Mass gatherings shall be prohibited. A mass gathering is a planned or spontaneous event where the number of people attending the event could strain the planning and response resources of the city or municipality

where the event will be held. It includes movie screenings, concerts, sporting events and other entertainment activities, community assemblies, and non-essential work-related gatherings. Essential work-related meetings and religious activities may continue so long as strict social distancing, defined as the strict maintenance of a distance of at least one (1) meter radius between and among those attending, is maintained during the entirety of the event. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) shall ensure that private establishments in operation strictly maintain social distancing in their businesses;

3. A Community Quarantine is hereby imposed over the entire NCR. LGUs shall abide by the directives of the Department of Health (DOH) and the DILG in the imposition of general and enhanced community quarantine in their respective jurisdictions. *Provided*, Community Quarantine shall be defined as follows:
  - a. General community quarantine - where movement of people shall be limited to accessing basic necessities and work; and uniformed personnel and quarantine officers shall be present at border points;
  - b. Enhanced community quarantine - where strict home quarantine shall be implemented in all households; transportation shall be suspended; provision for food and essential health services shall be regulated; and heightened presence of uniformed personnel to enforce quarantine procedures will be implemented.

Subject to qualifications the IATF may provide, all areas under general community quarantine shall implement the following:

- a. Restrict the non-essential entry of people to the contained area, especially persons who are at high risk of being infected i.e., those sixty (60) years old and above, those who are immunocompromised or with co-morbidities, and pregnant women), except: (1) health workers, (2) authorized government officials, (3) those traveling for medical or humanitarian reasons, (4) persons transiting to airport for travel abroad, (5) persons providing basic services and public utilities, and (6) essential skeletal workforce;
- b. Prevent the non-essential exit of people out of the contained area, except: (1) health workers, (2) authorized government officials (3) those traveling for medical or humanitarian reasons, and (4) those who were granted entry based on the above-mentioned provisions. *Provided*, that all persons leaving the contained community must be checked for signs and symptoms (e.g., fever, respiratory symptoms, diarrhea) at exit checkpoint where (1) appropriate certification will be issued by the competent health authorities (DOH or Provincial/City/Municipal Health Office) (2) health authority endorses exiting person to recipient LGUs (3) exiting persons must undertake 14-day home

based quarantine, and (4) LGUs are required to monitor implementation of home-based quarantine;

LGUs which have imposed community quarantine in their respective jurisdictions, upon declaration of a State of Calamity, shall be allowed to access their Quick Response Fund;

4. Alternative working arrangements, including but not limited to, work-from home, compressed work week, staggered working hours, and creation of skeletal workforces, will be implemented in the Executive branch. All members of the PNP, AFP and PCG, and health and emergency frontline services are directed to continue full operation. The Legislative and Judicial branches of government, as well as the independent constitutional bodies, are encouraged to adopt this policy;
5. Flexible work arrangements shall be encouraged in the private sector. For this purpose, the pertinent advisories and guidelines of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the DTI shall apply. All manufacturing, retail and service establishments are advised to remain open. In all cases, strict social distancing measures are required to be observed by their respective managements;
6. Mass public transport facilities, including the Light Rail Transits, the Metro Rail Transit, and the Philippine National Railways shall continue in operation. In this regard, the Department of Transportation is directed to issue guidelines to ensure social distancing in said public transports, as well as in other means of public transportation; and
7. Land, domestic air and domestic sea travel to and from the NCR shall be restricted. All workers, whether employed or self-employed, will be provisionally allowed to travel to and from the NCR, subject to review by the IATF if public health considerations so warrant. *Provided*, that proof of employment and/or business must be presented at border checkpoints;

All departing passengers shall be allowed transit through the NCR. *Provided*, that proof of confirmed international travel itinerary scheduled within twelve (12) hours from entry should be presented at checkpoints. *Provided, further*, that the aforementioned provisions shall not be interpreted to allow outbound travel to countries where travel restrictions are in place; and

The movement of cargoes to and from the NCR, or in such other places which may be the subject of a community quarantine, shall be unhampered.

LGUs outside of the NCR are advised to exercise sound discretion in suspending classes in their respective jurisdictions, provided that measures and arrangements are in place to allow the students to continue fulfilling their requirements, in coordination with the DepEd or CHED. Whenever a class suspension is ordered, the concerned LGU, with the assistance of the DILG, shall be

responsible for implementing measures to ensure that students remain in their homes during the class suspension.

*Balik-Manggagawa* Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) shall be allowed to travel to mainland China, except to Hubei Province, upon execution of a *Declaration* signifying their knowledge and understanding of the risks involved. In all cases, the DOLE shall issue a health advisory guide to the OFWs, upon departure.

Inbound travelers from Iran and Italy are required to present a medical certificate issued by competent medical authorities within forty-eight (48) hours immediately preceding departure, signifying that the traveler has tested negative for COVID-19. *Provided*, that this provision shall not apply to Filipino citizens including their foreign spouse and children, if any, holders of Permanent Resident Visa, and holders of 9(e) Diplomat Visas issued by the Philippine Government. All previous travel restrictions issued by the IATF shall remain in effect.

The DOH is hereinafter authorized to grant exemptions, based on humanitarian considerations, in favor of outbound travelers traveling to jurisdictions where travel restrictions are currently in place.

The IATF shall establish regional inter-agency task groups in all of the regions in the country. Further, the DOH with the aid of law enforcement agencies shall form composite teams to ensure enhanced contact-tracing and containment measures in all parts of the country.

Failure to abide by the foregoing guidelines and measures shall be meted with appropriate action, in accordance with relevant laws and regulations. For this purpose, the Department of Justice is directed to initiate appropriate charges, as may be warranted.

The IATF, together with the Executive Secretary, Cabinet Secretary, Secretaries of National Defense, Environment and Natural Resources, Trade and Industry, Social Welfare and Development, Education, Agriculture, Chief of Staff of the AFP, heads of the Philippine Army, Philippine Navy, Philippine Air Force, PCG and the PNP, and such other agencies or entities as the IATF may invite, shall convene daily to study and continuously review the measures and guidelines in addressing the COVID-19 situation, until such time that the health event subsides.

Finally, member agencies of the IATF and other identified agencies are hereby directed to finalize and submit their respective guidelines in the implementation of Community Quarantine to the DOH by 14 March 2020, at 2:00 p.m. Protocols of the Department of Social Welfare and Development on social amelioration are approved in principle subject to the condition that these protocols and/or guidelines adhere to the parameters set by the IATF.

For immediate compliance.

By Order of the President:

